

## SHORT NOTE

### A little black cormorant (*Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*) from Kadavu Island, Fiji

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On the morning of 4 November 2004 on the shore not far from Nacomoto Village, south-east Kadavu Island, Fiji, I observed a strange looking bird sitting on a log resting at the mouth of a mangrove-lined creek. The bird was clearly a cormorant or shag, neither of which were on the Fijian bird list (Watling 2001). The bird was consorting with a group of 20+ grey ducks (*Anas superciliosa*). The villagers of Nacomoto were aware of the bird and indicated that it was a singleton, it had been around the village for a little over a year, and that it was usually seen with the ducks. After consulting Harrison (1987) and Heather & Robertson (1996), I returned to Nacomoto to find the bird still present.

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On 20 November 2004 at 0630 hrs, I managed to photograph it on mudflats close to the village, and subsequently identified it as a little black cormorant (*Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*), because of its size was comparable with the grey ducks, its all black plumage, and long grey-coloured bill.

Little black cormorants have not been recorded in Fiji or Polynesia before, the nearest resident colonies being in North Island, New Zealand to the south and Papua New Guinea to the west. Vagrants have been recorded in New Caledonia, and on Norfolk and Lord Howe Islands (del Hoyo *et al.* 1992) and so its presence in Fiji is not altogether unexpected.

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## SHORT NOTE

### Molecular systematics of Macquarie Island and Reischek's parakeets

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Our previous study (Boon *et al.* 2001) demonstrated an apparently close genetic relationship between the nominate taxa *Cyanoramphus erythrotis* (Macquarie Island) and *C. hochstetteri*. Detailed DNA sequencing of Control Region targets from the mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) genomes of either fresh or museum specimens of these species showed only between two and five nucleotide differences over the 395 nucleotide target region compared. Taken together with extensive phylogenetic analyses of these and those from other *Cyanoramphus* specimens lead us to conclude that the latter should be relegated to a subspecies of the former as *C. e. hochstetteri*. These findings were presented in good faith based on our understanding that the Canterbury Museum specimen of the Macquarie island parakeet (AV2099) from which we extracted DNA for analysis was an authentic specimen of *C. erythrotis*.

Scofield (2005) has presented convincing arguments to show that AV2099 is much more likely to be a specimen of the red-crowned parakeet found on the Antipodes (Reischek's parakeet).